



Living for Christ

ST·MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Exciting Times on the Horizon as School Resumes at StMCS

An exciting year is on the horizon for students at St. Michael Catholic School. New teachers, events and participation in an exciting diocese-wide Mass are just some of the things school students can look forward to in the coming months.

Just before the year kicked off in early September, Principal Jenny Haller says the students and faculty enjoyed a picnic for new families and school open houses.

“These are exciting evenings in which everyone re-connects or meets new friends and families,”

Mrs. Haller says. “All new families are assigned mentor families who serve as supportive friends and guides to help people get acclimated to our community.”

A school-wide Weekly Welcome and Worship was held the first week of classes to help students get into the right frame of mind for study and community building.

“We prayed in thanksgiving for a wonderful summer and a new school year,” Mrs. Haller says. “We viewed an awesome new video about our school as we celebrated all that makes StMCS special. We ended the first week, as we do each week, with an all-school Mass. Our eighth-graders assumed responsibility for the readings, petitions and music, and were amazing role models for all of our younger students.”

As the students grow together in faith, Mrs. Haller says the school is looking forward to continuing to collaborate with the Catholic Schools Center of Excellence through the archdiocese. On Oct. 10, students in fourth through eighth grades will participate in the Mass of the Holy Spirit at U.S. Bank Stadium. This special event brings together students from 79 elementary schools to celebrate an unforgettable Mass.

“We are excited about another year of building our Christ-centered community by growing in our understanding of hospitality, prayer and service through our religious studies and other formation experiences,” Mrs. Haller says.

New to this year’s faculty are fourth-grade teacher Miss Tori Fuhrman and a new seventh and eighth-grade math teacher, Mrs. Phoebe Solek. In addition, the



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Good Stewardship of Our Social Media

When we are talking about the idea of stewardship and how we care for the tools and gifts we have been given, it is not often that we stop to have a conversation about how we are caring for and using the gift of social media to positively spread Gospel values. However, this is an appropriate topic for us to consider when we are talking about the many young people, as well as adults, who gather online on a frequent basis. Therefore, it is important for us to think about how we are using the amazing gifts of technology.

If you are frequently online — especially on Pinterest — there is a popular acronym that you may have already come across. While it is used in many different contexts, it seems very appropriate to follow as we find ourselves posting statuses and pictures on various social media sites. The acronym is T.H.I.N.K., and it invites us to consider what we are saying and sharing, and whether or not it should be said!

Is what we are posting:

TTrue? Are we sharing factual information or a rumor that we heard, and if we think our information is factual, what is our source? Is it trustworthy?

Helpful? Is the information we are sharing something that can be useful to another person? We don't need to over-examine all of our content to consider its "educational factor," but is the content we are posting going to help someone

learn about us, learn about a place or an activity, think about the world, reflect on life, engage us in laughter, and so forth?

Inspirational? There is certainly no requirement to be a poet or an artist, but social media has become a wonderful outlet for positive self-expression. "Positive" is the key word — are we posting to inspire others about the good in our world, or are we posting to cut someone down or to simply rant?

Nice? Have we considered the feelings of others when we include them in a status or post a picture of them? Will they be embarrassed? Are we using social media to humiliate and intimidate others, or are we using it to try to better the world and the lives of others?

Kind? What a great tool to compliment, show gratitude, and build the self-esteem of those you care about!

People often speak of social media in a negative way because of the content they see posted. T.H.I.N.K. is a great way for us to remind ourselves that we can be good stewards of our own social media use. A major part of living out the Gospel has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others — and we can do just that by sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!



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A Letter From Our Pastor

This Month and Beyond, Let Us Share the Faith in Word and Action

Dear Parishioners,

When reading through our newsletter, it is clear that we often discuss and reflect upon the topic of ministries — within our community and beyond — and how Christ shares His ministry with us.

As a faith community that is committed to living out stewardship, we all share in Christ's ministry. And while we share our many gifts with God and His Church, we take the truths set forth in the readings from Scripture and apply them to present-day life. Of course, that's what you are supposed to do when you share your faith with your family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.

But what does it mean to "share our faith"? Well, it is exactly what parents — as the "domestic church" — are supposed to do with their children. Furthermore, lay people act as catechists when they teach religion classes in Catholic schools or help with religious education programs in their parishes.

"Sharing the faith" also encompasses serving and providing assistance to those in need, both within and beyond the parish community, or bringing the Eucharist to the ill or homebound who cannot regularly attend Mass. In these ways and more, lay people have many opportunities to participate directly in the ministry of the Church.

But as the Second Vatican Council reminded us, "An apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life; a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by words addressed



either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 6).

In other words, we must proclaim our Christian faith through our actions and how we live our lives — and *also* be prepared to share it in words if we are given the opportunity. With this in mind, we may each want to make a commitment of time to study the Scriptures and the Church's teachings so that we may be better prepared to share the faith!

Of course, the month of October draws us a little closer to the end of the year — thus, we are soon approaching the celebration of Thanksgiving, and the Advent and Christmas seasons. In the next few months, we will each have so many opportunities to share our faith through words and actions. I ask you to prayerfully consider how you will take advantage of these opportunities, living as stewards carrying out His ministry every day, for the rest of this year and beyond.

May God grant you the grace to share richly as a disciple of Christ!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Peter Richards,
Pastor

LOOKING TOWARD OUR *Sharing His Gifts Generously*

In a few short weeks, we will be conducting our Annual Stewardship Renewal here at St. Michael. Our theme is **“You Invited Me In,”** which we recognize based on “For I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35).

As Scripture tells us in the Gospel of Matthew, when we reach out to invite a stranger in to our community, it is Christ Himself Whom we are inviting. Let us, therefore, be eager to invite and embrace the stranger — those within our parish walls who still may feel isolated and those on the margins in our wider community who wait for an invitation to join our parish family.

Here at St. Michael, we want to help every individual know they are invited and welcome to be part of our Catholic family. The presence of hospitality and the invitation to “join us!” can make all the difference for a newcomer or a returning member of the church to feel at home here. Acquaintances should be welcomed with open arms and warm smiles. Visitors must feel the genuine love present in a hearty “welcome!” At St. Michael, we invite the stranger to join us as family, for that stranger is none other than Christ Himself standing before us.

“I am very grateful for all of you who make St. Michael a place where all those we encounter will say, ‘You Invited Me In’ through your warm hospitality and your commitments of time, talent and treasure to God through our parish,” Fr. Peter Richards says. “Each year, we reexamine how we can grow in stewardship. We believe that God wants us to be a community of people who actively use all their gifts as disciples to love selflessly and unconditionally. We ask you to make commitments of

1. **Time** to pray personally and as a family; 2. **Talent** by participating in service through involvement in parish ministries; and 3. **Treasure**, by committing a proportional amount of our income to God.”

The following questions and answers pertain to our annual renewal, and can serve as a guide as you consider how you might participate in the life of our parish

What is a Stewardship Renewal? This is not a fundraiser — far from it. Our annual renewal is a time when each of us is asked to prioritize the ways we use God’s gifts. It is a time when we become more intentional about how we serve the Lord by making a written commitment in that regard.

When does the renewal culminate? *Our Commitment weekend is November 3-4.* Please bring your commitment cards to Masses that weekend. There is a



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STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL: *Generously as a Way of Life*

two-fold reason to complete that card and to make commitments. First, filling out the card helps us answer the call to pray and to serve. Second, the commitments allow our parish leaders to coordinate, develop, and responsibly manage parish ministries.

What exactly is a parish ministry? Although it is a general term, it refers to parish groups and organizations endorsed by the parish and which provide service in the name of Jesus. You can sign up for new ministries or re-commit to ministries in which you may already be involved.

Am I completely committed by filling out my card? You may find the ministry to be different from what you thought, or that the schedule demanded does not match your personal schedule. You may change your mind later, but there are many ministries to consider. In terms of treasure, your commitment is not a legal contract. Circumstances may change. However, your indication of what you think you can share is helpful to the parish for planning and budgeting. The standard of giving is based upon percentages, so if income decreases that will be reflected in the gift, just as an increase in income should also be reflected in your gift.

What if I do not fill out a commitment card? The card is not a requirement of membership in the parish. Nevertheless, we feel it is an important part of being an active members or our faith community. If we do not hear from you, we will send you a reminder letter with a new commitment card.

“As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, share them generously with others, and return them with increase to the Lord,” Fr. Richards says. “Please take the time to sit down with your family and prayerfully consider how God is calling you to grow in service? Will you accept the Lord’s invitation?”



For more information on our Stewardship Renewal, please contact the parish office at 763-497-2745.



A Spiritual House

Your Guide to Our Church

THE ART OF ST. MICHAEL:

The Baptismal Fount Mosaics

This month, we continue exploring the eight mosaics on our baptismal font, which are based on illuminations from St. Hildegard of Bingen's book, *Scivias*.



The Fifth Day of Creation:
Creatures of the Air and Water

Then God said: Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky. God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of crawling living creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. God saw that it was good, and God blessed them, saying: Be fertile, multiply, and fill the water of the seas; and let the birds multiply on the earth. Evening came, and morning followed — the fifth day. — *Genesis 1:20-23*

In the fifth mosaic, God in His wisdom creates the myriad and strange creatures of the sea and air — strange and stately birds, and fish silent and shining — blessing them with fertility in abundance, that the world may manifest the wonders of His love for us.



The Sixth Day of Creation:
Creatures of the Earth

Then God said: Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: tame animals, crawling things, and every kind of wild animal. And so it happened: God made every kind of wild animal, every kind of tame animal, and every kind of thing that crawls on the ground. God saw that it was good. — *Genesis 1:24-25*

Fish and fowl were not enough to show the Father's love: on the sixth day, He speaks into being the cattle and the creeping things, an abundance and diversity of creatures to serve the needs and companionship of the one creature yet to come, who will be created in His divine image.

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Stewardship Witness: *What it Means to Be “Living for Christ”*

At a recent gathering of our parish ministry leaders, we asked what “Living for Christ” means to them on a personal level. As a stewardship parish, we strive that each and every parishioner take to heart this message that we pray as the closing petition of our Parish Mission prayer: “May we become a people Living for Christ.” This month, we are happy to share with you some of those responses as part of our Stewardship Witness Series.

What does living for Christ mean to you?

“Experiencing the power of God’s love and mercy, and seeking to pass that onto others.”

“Go therefore and make disciples of all, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!”

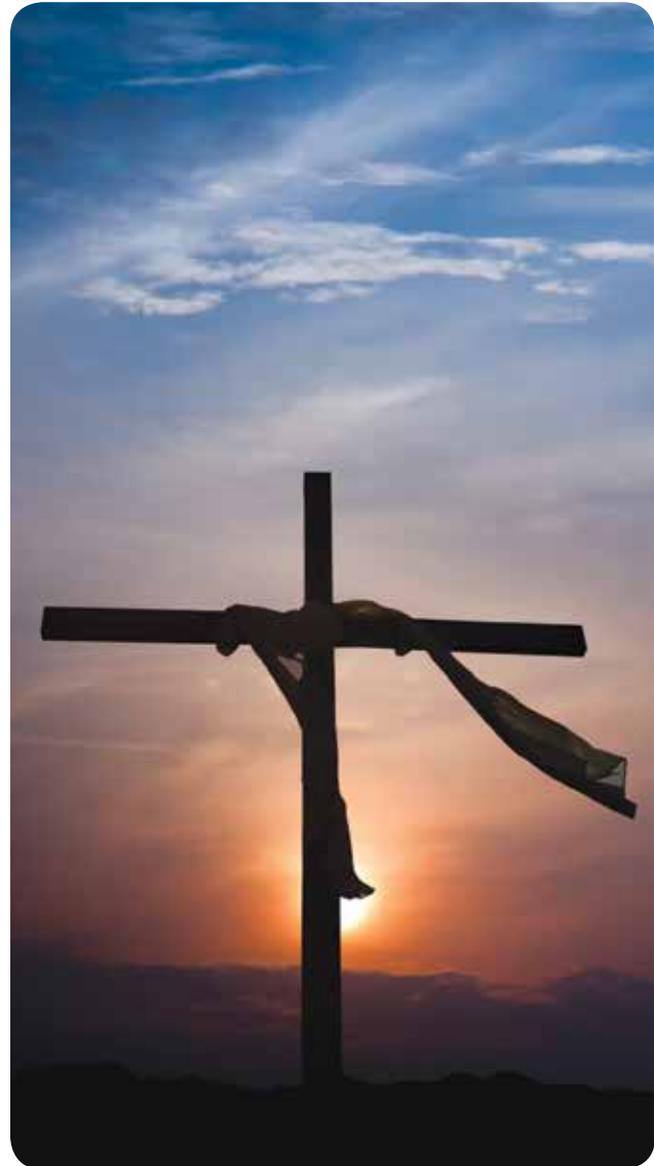
“Being an example to others of love, an example of church going to children, and an example of **Catholicism** to the local community.”

“To live as Christ lives. To follow His example for us. To love others, to do for others. To be welcoming, to learn as much as we can from our leaders of our parish. To grow or continue to grow in our faith. To get closer to Jesus as we grow in our faith. To learn to serve others.”

“Living for Christ means that I am trying to do His will in all that I do. It means that as a husband and father, that I try to live for more than just myself. I try to spend each day giving to my family with small acts of love. It means teaching and living the faith with my family. My greatest circle of influence is myself and my family. The more we can embody the Holy family, the more we will change the world. Along with my family, if I can also extend to others than I can meet other where they are at.”

“The reflection of everyday life witnessed by people of all faiths. Do people see me as a ‘good example’ of the witness of Christ’s life here on earth?

- Kindness
- Compassion
- Generous of both time and resources
- Forgiveness of life’s challenges
- Thankful for everyday, simple things.”



*And we would like to hear from YOU!
Please share your personal stories and reflection
about living for Christ with us at
stewardshipcouncil@stmccatholicchurch.org
or through the parish office.*

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ST·MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

**11300 Frankfort Parkway
St. Michael, MN 55376**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

Daily Mass

Monday, 7:30 a.m.

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, 7:30 a.m.

Friday, 7:45 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.,
3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 5:15 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

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<https://www.facebook.com/stmcatholicchurch>

QUOTES FOR CATHOLIC LIVING

“No one can live without delight, and that is why a man deprived of spiritual joy goes over to carnal pleasures.”

—*St. Thomas Aquinas*

Exciting Times on the Horizon as School Resumes at StMCS *continued from front cover*

school is continuing its commitment to quality education by continuing to pursue accreditation through the Minnesota Non-Public Schools Accrediting Association (MNSAA).

“This is our renewal year, which means we will be hosting a three-day onsite visit from eight professionals in November,” Mrs. Haller says. “The team will come to visit and validate our extensive self-study report and our latest school strategic plan. Being accredited by MNSAA is a special distinction as it shows our commitment to rigorous standards in all aspects of school life and it exemplifies our desire for continuous improvement.”

“We are excited about another year of building our Christ-centered community by growing in our understanding of hospitality, prayer and service through our religious studies and other formation experiences.”

— **Principal Jenny Haller**

Check out the school website at stmcatholicchurch.org/stmcs to see videos and get more information about StMCS. For more information on enrollment or to ask questions, please call the school office at 763-497-3887.